

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF BELMONT  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM  
Monday, November 1, 2010  
7:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Board was called to order in open session at 7:00 pm by Chair Jones in the Town Hall Auditorium. Selectmen Firenze and Paolillo were present. Town Administrator Tom Younger and Assistant Town Administrator Jeff Conti were present.

**QUESTIONS FROM TOWN RESIDENTS**

Mr. Don Becker, a Horne Road resident and President of the Cushing Square Neighborhood Association (CSNA), spoke to express the CSNA's support and to offer thanks to the Board for terminating negotiations on the sale of the parking lot in Cushing Square. He noted that the decision was a complicated one as this was a complex issue. He spoke to the developer's lack of appropriate financial disclosure, and to the need to move forward collaboratively.

**ACTION BY APPOINTMENT**

**OPEB Actuarial Report – Willis/Ricci Consultants, Inc.**

Mr. Stu Rubenstein from Willis Consultants and Ms. Linda Bourniville from Ricci Consultants, Inc. appeared before the Board (as introduced by Town Accountant Barbara Hagg) to present the OPEB actuarial report. Chair Jones noted that this report represented the third report to date in order to comply with government standards (GASB 45).

Mr. Rubenstein: The cost of these benefits must be recognized while the recipients are active employees of the Town of Belmont. The town has an expense of \$18M (an accrual cost) with a \$3M yearly pay-as-you-go obligation. The pay-as-you-go obligation refers to the annual payments to town and school retirees (including teachers) for health insurance. The Board asked various questions regarding this obligation. It was noted that teachers account for more than half of the participants of OPEB. Chair Jones asked about retirees and spouses – he said he wants a correct number of retirees. He also expressed a desire to analyze the assumptions made regarding the cost of health insurance coverage.

The Board discussed issues relating to this report. Only ten percent of private sector employees have this particular benefit, noted Chair Jones. Selectman Firenze confirmed that the \$18M liability is for 30 years (amortized) totaling \$180M. Chair Jones noted two

options available to Belmont: negotiate changes in health benefits with employees and/or reduce Belmont's (as the employer) contribution.

The Board discussed some strategies to curb this benefit cost. Chair Jones said that while we manage our debt well, Belmont has failed to manage this particular liability.

Selectman Paolillo said he would contact the Warrant Committee and try to develop a group to study this issue.

### **Verizon Petition No. D10-39**

Mr. John Callahan, from Verizon, appeared before the Board regarding the Verizon Petition No. D10-39. He explained the dimensions of the conduits on Jason Road. Mr. Younger said that the Water Division asked that the conduits be placed close to the side of the road.

*The Board moved:* To approve the request on the petition noted above.  
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

### **One Day Liquor License – First Church in Belmont**

Ms. Carolyn Howard appeared before the Board regarding the one-day liquor license requested by First Church Belmont for November 20, 2010.

*The Board moved:* To approve the one-day liquor license request for the November 20 event.  
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

### **ACTION BY CONSENT**

#### **Proclamation of the November “Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month”**

Ms. Susan Polit appeared before the Board regarding the Proclamation.

*The Board moved:* To approve the Proclamation as noted above.  
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board signed the Proclamation papers.

Chair Jones read the Proclamation.

### **ACTION BY WRITING**

#### **Approval of License for Lodging House, 386 Common Street (all requirements met)**

Mr. Younger noted that all of the paperwork is now in order, but he will check on the end dates.

*The Board moved:* To approve the license request for 386 Common Street (through 2011).

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

### **Goals and Objectives Discussion**

Mr. Younger said that he and Mr. Conti had reviewed the goals and discussed how to move forward on the six objectives. Chair Jones noted areas that are not included in the goals and objectives document that need to be prioritized as well, such as the Town Administrator's evaluation, the budget process work, collective bargaining, etc. The Board, Mr. Younger, and Mr. Conti discussed the task of prioritizing these items as well as the most efficient way to develop and execute "action steps". Selectman Paolillo suggested breaking the items down to develop the action steps. The Board discussed developing strategic plans with the department heads for their departments.

Selectman Paolillo offered to take the initiative on the 2012 budget process with an aim to having the Board of Selectmen take a more active role in the budget process and policy decisions, and to turn this data into action steps.

The Board discussed as a possible goal the parking challenges facing Belmont, e.g., smart meters, all day parking.

Selectman Firenze suggested that each month, time could be set aside to revisit the six objectives. Mr. Younger said he would place this on the agenda for December.

### **Town Administrator's Report**

Mr. Younger reported on the following items:

- The Concord Road pavement management project is ongoing.
  - The skating rink opened on October 30. Mr. Younger will give periodic updates on the expenses and revenues.
  - The Benton Library neighborhood committee is reviewing the license agreement. Chair Jones requested that Mr. Conti try to solicit a PILOT payment. The Board discussed this point.
  - The new craft beer store on Leonard Street is opening on November 10.
  - Belmont Center public hearings are being held regarding studying the roadways, parking issues, directional routes of traffic, etc.
  - Headway has been made on the issue of double poles in town. Mr. Palmer (Electric Department) has been very helpful in coordinating this effort with Verizon. Selectman Firenze broached the subject of eliminating more poles by replacing the MBTA electric bus line with a conventional bus. Chair Jones noted this would require the cooperation of Watertown and Cambridge.

## **OTHER**

- The MEGA group met recently and discussed building a hockey rink on the former incinerator street. A resident contacted Chair Jones and noted that most initiatives proposed for this site have been rejected by the Conservation Commission (ConCom). Mr. Younger will schedule ConCom for the November 15 Board meeting to discuss the incinerator site and committee appointments.
- Money is needed in the sidewalk budget (which is currently zero). There are 1,000 complaints on sidewalks. Selectman Firenze suggested contacting Mr. Castanino to determine what funding would be necessary to make a dent in those complaints. Mr. Younger suggested that starting with some funding in the Capital Budget makes sense.
- Selectman Firenze asked about the follow-up to concerns raised by neighbors about the Senior Center at a recent Board meeting, e.g., light pole height, security camera sight lines.

### **Warrant Committee (WC) Update – Chair Jones**

Chair Jones noted that the WC finalized its CPA report. This Wednesday they will discuss the town budget, including revenues and the town/school split. The schools' budgeting process will include a request to take special education out of the school operating budget as it is not a discretionary cost.

### **TM Warrant Articles Approval**

The Board reviewed the Articles.

*The Board moved:* To move favorable action on Article 2.  
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*The Board moved:* To move favorable action on Article 4.  
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*The Board moved:* To move favorable action on Article 6.  
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*The Board moved:* To move unfavorable action on Article 7.  
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*The Board moved:* To move unfavorable action on Article 8.  
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*The Board moved:* To move favorable action Article 9.  
The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

**ACTION BY APPOINTMENT** *(continued)*

**Executive Session – Negotiations with Non-Union Personnel and Litigation**

*The Board moved:* To enter into executive session at 9:06 p.m. to discuss negotiations with non-union personnel and litigation. The Board will not return to open session.

The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

*(During executive session, one substantive motion was made and passed unanimously. The Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:54 pm.)*